

# **Springfield Strategic Plan**

## **Planning Committee Chapter Templates**

### **Template A – Vision, Themes, Input, and Inter-relationships**

(Complete only one Template A form per committee)

The planning committee's vision for the Springfield metropolitan community in the year 2030 as it relates to the committee's planning topic:

**See TEMPLATE A attachment from the *Springfield-Greene County Comprehensive Plan for Parks, Open Space and Greenways*.**

### **PARK SYSTEM**

- History of Park Development in Springfield and Greene County
- Foundation of the Plan: Theme, Pattern, and Principles (Vision and Inter-relationships)

See **Attachment A—Page 2**

Cover of the:

*Springfield-Greene County Comprehensive Plan  
Parks, Open Space and Greenways Plan Element*

## Park System

### History of Park Development in Springfield and Greene County

Lafayette Park and Washington Park were the first parks platted in Springfield. Platted in 1869, they were actually located in the town of North Springfield. Most of Springfield parks were planned and built in the tradition of the City Beautiful movement that was associated with the “Grand Plans.” Springfield’s park system emerged with the creation of the Park Board in 1913. Grant Beach Park was the first park purchased by the Park Board in 1914. In 1916, a formalized Parks Master Plan was completed to serve as a guide in acquiring and developing future park sites. This master plan was developed during the City Beautiful Movement; a time when quality of civic architecture and public space design was at its peak. Phelps Grove, Grant Beach, and Silver Springs parks were developed from 1914 to 1918 and the development of Fassnight, Smith and Doling parks followed from 1925 to the early 1930’s. Sequiota Park, originally a fish hatchery, became an excursion train ride for Springfieldians escaping the heat and hectic nature of the city. National Avenue developed as a “grand parkway” with trees and residences lining the corridor providing a park-like setting along a transportation corridor. Many of these early parks, established from a movement to preserve land, provide respite from urban pressures, and accommodate recreational opportunity remain Springfield favorites in part due to the characteristics developed during the City Beautiful movement.

In the 1964 Comprehensive Plan a neighborhood-community concept encouraged centrally located neighborhood parks and schools and links between each neighborhood. The 1976 Springfield Parks and Recreation Master Plan took an extensive look at the parks and recreation facilities, programs, and organizational structure of the park system. The *Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment for Greene County, Missouri* prepared in 1992 was conducted to assist Greene County in planning for future outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. In 1996, a joint city-county park board formed with the citizens approval of the Springfield-Greene County Park Board.

### Historic Parks

Historic parks are those parks planned and built prior to 1935 and influenced by the American City Beautiful movement. They are identified by their distinct architectural, cultural, and historical features. Most of the historic parks have distinct architectural style featuring field stone. Historic Parks are not a separate park classification, but a designation based on the era of the park and its historical significance to the community. The parks in the Springfield-Greene County Park System with historical significance include:

- Doling Park
- Dickerson Park Zoo
- Fassnight Park
- Lafayette Park
- Phelps Grove Park
- Sequiota Park
- Silver Springs Park
- Smith Park
- Washington Park

The historic parks display a distinct character. It is important to continue with the themes of the early development of the parks and the park system. The stone structures and retaining walls, brick walkways, historic lighting, furniture, and landscaping should be retained or returned as appropriate.

These parks are important to Springfield because of their ties with the past. Historic parks were traditionally central to life in days gone by and were important elements of life to people growing up in Springfield. They provided a place to play, gather, and exhibit the creativity and energy of the growing community. It is important to remember this era in the development of Springfield.

## Foundation of The Plan: Theme, Pattern, and Principles

Throughout the *Vision 20/20* process there have been similar ideas and concepts that have appeared in each of the Focus Groups. These “themes” are the common threads for the entire process and are also significant to the Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Element. Each of the following themes can be applied to the park system.

- The *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways* concept was the one major theme identified by every Focus Group. Additional parks, greenways, trails, and preserved open space and trees were desired as a necessary component of the community’s future development pattern.
- Providing *Quality Design* in public and private development.
- Creating a stronger *Sense of Place* with *Unique Qualities*.
- Promote *Environmental Stewardship* and *Energy Efficiency* to protect and enhance the natural environment while taking steps to efficiently utilize our energy resources in autos, building practices, land use management, etc.
- Providing a *Sense of Community* by making decisions in the public interest and caring for the community.
- Ensuring an area of the community that comprises *higher densities, mixed use, transit, pedestrian and bicycle* facilities, was expressed in conjunction with offering the opportunity to live near shopping, work, and public facilities.
- *Revitalize, maintain, and re-use the existing city*; particularly creating a *vital center city*.
- Provide a *safe community*.

### Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Goal

The process, ideas, and vision summarized above are expressed as the goal for future parks, open space, and greenways in Springfield and Greene County in the following statement:

*To create a safe, accessible, comprehensive system of parks, open space, and greenways with sufficient land and facilities that connect selected public and private spaces while preserving the natural environment.*

The Parks, Open Space, and Greenways element of *Vision 20/20* describes the proposed method of meeting this goal. Implementation of this element of the plan will require the participation and dedication of all segments of the community working in concert with city and county government.

## **Community As A Park - The Pattern of Parks, Open Space, and Greenways**

Critical to the success of the park system plan is its power to influence the structuring of urban land use patterns. Within this *community as a park* all human needs such as housing, employment, commerce, education, transportation, preservation, conservation, and recreation occur in rational and harmonious patterns which respect and enhance the landscape. The *community as a park* concept supports quality of life, community sustainability, and complementary property relationships which enhance individual and community wealth and prosperity. Essentially, the park system must be designed in a way that moves the community into a development mind-set that embraces the fundamental proposition that the *entire community is a park*.

In order to develop the concept of "community as a park," the pattern of the park system must be designed to structure urban land use in a rational and harmonious manner on the foundation of the open space system. The open space system is comprised of parks, greenways, pathways, sensitive and significant features, and open land. The pattern includes:

- Existing and future parks;
- The street and parkway system;
- Utility easements;
- The drainageways forming the basis for the greenways;
- Lakes;
- Significant and sensitive natural features;
- Schools;
- Other public land;
- Open space; and
- Private recreation land.

These lands and facilities form a pattern that helps define the physical community. Existing and future parks located strategically throughout the community provide land for recreation and open space. Greenways provide pathways, open space, and hiking and biking opportunities along diverse corridors within the community linking many of the parks and open spaces with each other and residents. School land, City Utilities land, and other public land also serve people as parks and open space in the system. As development occurs, it should be built in concert with the park, open space, and greenway system, connecting people's living and working environments with the open space system. The most important element in this pattern is the greenway system. Greenways are critical in providing the paths and connections within the system and are the "thread" that binds the entire community together.

### **Community As A Park Recommendations**

- View the entire community as a park. Establish the park and greenway pattern and build the community upon this framework.
- Continually update the parks, open space, and greenways system plan to ensure these facilities are planned in advance of development.
- Adopt policies and ordinances that consider parks and greenways when acquiring land, obtaining easements, or making public improvements.

## **Environmental Considerations**

Throughout the *Vision 20/20* planning process, citizens have expressed their desire that future development of the community meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Thus, a high quality of life for all people in the community is the Plan's central purpose.

The park system can provide the "thread" that binds our relationship with the natural environment in the urban setting. As land is developed, the parks system is the means for providing the structure to preserve land for environmental and recreational purposes. The park system can preserve many of the significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and provide visual buffering. These lands consist of sites exhibiting significant or sensitive natural resources such as:

- unusual geological features
- springs
- caves
- forest lands
- wildlife habitat
- viewsheds

In addition, lands that are unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential include steep slopes, drainageways, flood plains, and sink holes.

Land and natural resources that are outside the scope of the park system should also be preserved as open space to enhance the livability and character of the community by preserving as many of its natural amenities as possible. This can be accomplished through careful and insightful regulation of development to preserve natural resources and open space. Efforts should be coordinated with other natural resource agencies including the Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, National Park Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, among others.

As these resources are linked and intertwined within the park system, they provide a respite from urban living and offer recreational opportunity. This intertwining is what helps to create the concept of the community-as-park; the integration of the human element with that of the surrounding natural environment.

### **Environmental Considerations Recommendations**

- Protect stream corridors and significant natural features and resources.
- Foster cooperative arrangements with other agencies and organizations to accomplish park, open space, and greenway environmental objectives.
- Preserve the natural landscape in stream corridors and around significant natural features.
- Discourage the channelization of stream corridors.
- Encourage the dedication of floodplain land during the subdivision process to develop the conservation network.
- Revise existing ordinances to prohibit the platting of lots or construction of structures within the F.E.M.A. designated 100-year floodplain.
- Revise existing ordinances to prohibit the location of stormwater management facilities on platted residential lots.
- Employ the most appropriate methods of environmental protection and energy efficiency possible when constructing or rehabilitating buildings or facilities, to include park facilities. For example:
  - utilize constructed wetlands, when appropriate, to treat storm water runoff;
  - provide advanced energy efficiency in building construction;



- provide natural or native vegetation (as opposed to exotic vegetation) in landscaping; and
- minimize the use of irrigation, pesticides, and herbicides.
- Provide environmental education materials and programs in parks.
- Actively promote environmental education to residents, businesses and industries throughout the community. Educate the community on positive environmental practices in their everyday lives.
- Improve and expand the recycling efforts within the community. Develop quality recycling drop off facilities and ensure placement of recycling facilities in all public places, including high traffic areas. The public sector should set the standard when it comes to environmental responsibility and recycling efforts in the community.
- Promote the redevelopment of former or polluted “brownfield” industrial sites in the industrial area. Specifically redevelop and create new park land in the Jordan Creek Valley.
- Develop ways to connect residential developments to parks utilizing trails or natural drainage patterns as much as possible.

## Social Considerations

As communities developed across our country the town square, often containing a park, and main street were integral components of the physical community landscape. These features helped to create a “sense of place” and identity for citizens of the community. A central place to meet, greet and exchange news and socialize with each other was a part of daily routine.

As small towns grew to cities and cities spawned suburbs, the loss of a central community “place” has become extinct. Main street, the town square and local barber shop have been replaced with strip malls and mega retail outlets. The one element of a community neighborhood which continues to remain constant is our community park lands. Throughout history citizens have taken great pride in their local parks and demand for protection increases incrementally every time local park lands or open spaces are threatened. A leading indicator in the quality of life and community image of cities is increasingly perceived as the way in which a community treats its parks, open spaces and natural features. In many cases, an important criteria for business relocation or expansion to communities is the park and recreational opportunities for company employees.

Recreational experience is universally recognized as one of the basic needs in human life. When a need is identified and deemed significant to society, then governmental authority, as well as private and philanthropic enterprise, enter to help administer such needs for the mutual benefit and welfare of all concerned. It is well known that recreational activity is an aspect of life of such importance that modern society would suffer an inestimable loss without such a mode of expression. (*Principles and Practices of Recreation Service*, Jay S. Shivery, University of Connecticut, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967.)

Research shows that youth participation in sports, or pursuit of a special interest or hobby can redirect negative activity into positive outcomes for the community. The social implications of involving youth at an early age in positive and meaningful activities could impact the community resources spent on the administration of our criminal correction system.

Regardless of one's age, status, or position in the community, local community-serving parks play a role in a person's attitudes and perceptions of the community. A poorly

maintained or vandalized park may convey a message of disrespect and negative images of how the community as a whole values a particular neighborhood. However, a well designed clean and safe park environment sends a message of self-worth, positive community values respect for property and fellow citizens.

Parks provide for the involvement of citizens throughout ones life. From your first baby carriage ride through a neighborhood park, to a brisk walk in your later years or the fellowship of friends and family at a picnic reunion parks serve the entire community.

## Shared Use Principle

The shared use concept was proposed in the *Vision 20/20* focus groups and was expressed in the responses from a community parks survey. The result of this discussion is that it is incumbent upon all public agencies to maximize the use of their land and facilities. The best way to do this is to share with each other. The same citizens pay for public land and facilities and are entitled to use them to the maximum extent possible. Therefore, the shared use concept is based on the belief that efficiency and improved quality of life will be gained by the sharing of public land and facilities.

Schools can serve neighborhood or community recreational needs in conjunction with the Parks Department. Library branches can be located within community centers. Fire stations could contain community meeting facilities. These are examples of the shared use principle in which the use of public land and facilities can be expanded through the use of joint use agreements between agencies. While there are instances, especially in recent years, where the shared use concept is occurring, this practice should become the norm instead of the exception.

**Joint Use Agreement.** The first step toward implementing the Shared Use Principle is to execute joint use agreements between the public entities involved. The agreement should define the responsibilities of properties, facilities, and resources to be jointly used. A joint-use agreement should also define how the property and facilities will be acquired, developed, improved, managed, programmed, and maintained. Liability for the participating agencies must be included in the joint- use agreement.

**Proposed Shared Use Facilities.** Land, facilities, and resources should be shared between public agencies including but not limited to City Utilities, the Fire Department, the Public Works Department, the Springfield-Greene County Library, Springfield-Greene County Park Board, and the Springfield Public School System.

***School-Parks*** The school-park concept was recommended in the 1976 *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* and the subsequent 1979 standards. This concept encourages the joint use of property between the City and Public School System for park and recreation purposes. A school-park is described as:

*A facility which combines a park, a school, a playground and other recreation facilities into a single unit for education, recreation, and related social and community activities. The result is more than simply the concentration of these facilities on a single site. It is a functional unit designed to include mutually supportive programs of education, recreation, and community activities.*

The Parks Department and Springfield Public Schools can share the cost of playground equipment since each normally provide these facilities, and the Parks Department can add picnicking, walking trails, tennis courts, etc. and help manage the "park."

### ***School-Park Recommendations***

- Fully utilize designated schools for park and recreation use.
- Acquisition of land for new schools should include additional land for park activities.
- Existing schools designated as school-parks should be redeveloped as one site. If necessary acquire additional land around existing schools to provide adequate park land.
- Establish a general use agreement between the City and Public School System for scope, commitments, procedures, and guidelines for the school-park concept.
- Review and update the school-park locations on an annual basis.
- Develop an implementation program for the proposed school-parks. Review and update the implementation priorities annually.
- Develop a site plan for all proposed school-park sites.
- Develop a maintenance program for the proposed school-parks between the Springfield Greene County Park Board and the Springfield Public School System.

***City Utilities.*** As a public utility, City Utilities owns considerable land with park, open space, and greenway potential. Some of the land is already used for recreation, but there are many more possibilities.

The greatest potential for shared use of City Utilities property is within the greenway system. As a part of the natural drainage system, Lake Springfield, Fellows and McDaniel Lakes, Valley Water Mill and Fulbright Spring can be integral to the greenway system and function as community or special use parks. The unique environmental features and water bodies allow potential opportunities for trails, nature study and interpretation, camping and lodging facilities, wildlife management, boating, and fishing.

### ***City Utilities Recommendations***

- Develop a management agreement between the Park Board and City Utilities for the maintenance and management of City Utilities property that is incorporated into the park, open space, and greenway system.
- Assess City Utilities future property acquisition and redevelopment of existing facilities for incorporation into the park, open space, and greenway system.
- Incorporate Fellows Lake and McDaniel Lake into the Little Sac River Greenway.
- Incorporate Lake Springfield into the James River Greenway.
- Incorporate Valley Water Mill and Fulbright Spring into the South Dry Sac River Greenway.

***Other Public Land.*** The city owns land throughout the community; some of which is appropriate for recreation. The Southwest Sewage Treatment property is already serving a multi-use function by hosting nature trails and the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway. The Airport is the site of cross-country track meets and hosts Springfield's Fourth of July celebration - Firefall. Community Centers,

Libraries, Fire Stations, Public Works facilities and properties and other public land can and should share facilities and property where possible.

### ***Other Public Land Recommendations***

- Inventory and analyze all public facilities and property for multiple uses, including uses in the parks, open space, and greenway system.
- Assess public land and facilities for inclusion into the parks, open space, and greenway system, as public lands are acquired, new facilities developed, or existing properties redeveloped.
- Establish an agreement with State and Federal Agencies to coordinate the development, acquisition, and interpretation of facilities and properties.

It is incumbent upon all governmental entities to provide an efficient use of public facilities through shared and multiple use. The school system, city, county, public utility, library district, park board, etc. must continue to work together to share land and facilities and carry out the integrated nature of the *Vision 20/20* Comprehensive Plan.

## **Regional Perspective**

The proposed Springfield-Greene County park system will make a significant impact in our region in the years to come if implemented according to this plan. The proposed system will impact economic development and the overall quality of life of everyone in Greene County and surrounding counties. The extensive system of greenways, trails, lakes, parks, and open space will be a supplement and alternative to the already significant tourism industry in the region.

Springfield is blessed to have several local recreation facilities that are assets to the community as well as the region. Dickerson Park Zoo, Ozark Empire Fairgrounds, Cooper/Killian Sports Complex, and our three public Golf Courses serve as community and regional assets. In fact, the sports and recreation components of our park system have been a state and national force for many years. Because of this, Springfield has been able to attract a professional tennis team, the Springfield Lasers, and continually hosts large amateur and collegiate tournaments at the state and national level.

It is recognized that attracting and hosting national and regional tournaments and franchise teams is an important component of the Parks Department and the economic vitality of the community. The prestige and wealth brought to the community by these activities is unquestionable. These are highly specialized and enterprising endeavors which require knowledge and skills outside the normal provision of park facilities and activities for the community. However, marketing and promotion of these recreation and park facilities should be done in a comprehensive manner with other public and private tourism facilities. This comprehensive approach to attracting visitors through promotion of the park system will pay off in providing dollars for the local economy as well as improving the quality of life for residents. The economic development approach also emphasizes a major element of this plan, viewing the entire “*Community As A Park.*”

### **Regional Perspective Recommendations**

- Prepare special plans to address the location, design, and management of Franchise Team Facilities and National/Regional Tournament Facilities.
- Continually update master plans for regional attractions and major facilities in an effort to recognize the importance of these activities as regional points of interest.
- Prepare a report to identify the economic impacts that the Park, Open Space, and Greenway System has on tourism and economic development in the urbanized area of Springfield. Include the role of tournaments as well as regional serving facilities and services that contribute to Springfield's tourism industry.

## **Template B – Five-Year Goals, Performance Measures, and Budgets**

(Complete a Template B form for each major goal)

Parks are being developed throughout the Region through the Springfield-Greene County Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 1998. Implementation of the Plan began in 2001 with the first voter approved County-Wide Quarter Cent Parks Sales Tax, which is put forth to the county voters every five (5) years for renewal to support the implementation of the comprehensive plan.

See the Attached Plan which is funded by a Quarter Cent County-Wide Parks Sales Tax.

### **TEMPLATE B: GENERAL STATEMENT & FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Future Development Areas**

Most future development will occur in the unincorporated portions of Greene County, and this is where most of the park land opportunity exists. The developing areas must receive the highest priority for land acquisition. Land acquisition must receive the highest priority (versus park development) until park land acquisition catches up with development trends. Otherwise, the land will be used up for development and it will be as difficult to acquire land.

#### **Proposed Park System**

The proposed park system, if implemented according to this plan, will meet the varied needs of the community for generations to come. The natural drainage patterns of the metropolitan area will provide the framework of a park system that features greenways, large community parks along the greenways, neighborhood parks and school-parks, special use parks, sports complexes and family recreation centers, and Civic Park in downtown Springfield. Natural, cultural, and historic resources will be preserved and enhanced throughout the system.

As one of the most important quality of life components, the park system must exhibit quality in design, construction, and maintenance. It should be a source of pride and help improve the local economy by inducing visitors to the area and encouraging economic investment in the community.

In order to create the proposed park system, it is necessary to place policies in effect now that will preserve the land and resources for future acquisition. Land acquisition must be a high priority since land is rapidly being consumed for urban development. Financial provisions must also be placed into effect to pay for the future park system. In other words, we must get "ahead of the curve" if future generations are going to enjoy the benefits of the proposed park system.

#### **Park System Recommendations**

- Actively pursue the acquisition of park land in areas of the community where park land is inadequate or nonexistent

- Modify the current strategy in the Capital Improvement Program to set aside money for park acquisition as well as park development.
- Ensure that designated park sites are secured for future use prior to being developed.
- Promote the unique nature of our historic parks to understand and appreciate their role in the history and cultural development of Springfield and Greene County.
- Preserve and enhance the character of the historic parks so they retain or regain their original appearance and feel. All planning, design, construction, and maintenance should respect the historic character and nature of the park.
- Encourage the development of parks and facilities that are located and face street and public rights-of-way. Discourage the practice of placing parks behind other developments with limited public access
- Integrate public improvements into existing and future parks and assure that these public improvements are compatible in a park setting. (e.g., streets, water, sewer, gas and electric lines, stormwater management facilities, etc.)
- Integrate stormwater management facilities into parks and design facilities that are functional (stormwater management) as well as aesthetic (attractive water feature).
- Encourage subdivisions to be connected to the park, open space, and greenway system by pedestrian and bicycle facilities, especially along natural drainageways.
- Provide convenient connections using trails and greenway corridors between parks and neighborhoods and activity centers as development occurs.
- Use recycled products and other environmentally friendly techniques when designing and developing parks, facilities and furniture.
- Establish a Planning and Design Division within the Park Department for the planning and design of parks and greenway corridors.
- Establish joint-use agreements between all participating agencies that will promote the sharing of land facilities and resources, provide a framework of understanding for all agencies involved in a project, avoid conflict, and eliminate duplication of services.
- Develop design and landscape standards for the entire park system.
- Develop a theme signage program to unify the park, open space, and greenway system.
- Develop and promote an Adopt-A-Park Program to encourage the community to participate in the maintenance and “ownership” of the park system.
- Establish a land trust to help acquire and manage land prior to becoming part of the park, open, space and greenway system.

## Improvement Strategy

**Key Components.** This plan proposes many new parks and facilities as well as improvements to existing parks in the system. The highlights of the plan include the following major improvements to the park system:

- Implementation of a 130-mile greenway system.
- Design and development of Civic Park.
- Development of 5 Metropolitan Community Parks.
- Preservation of 6 Natural Resource Areas.
- Designation and improvement of 22-plus School-Parks.
- Development of 1 new and replacement of 2 existing sports complexes.

- Designation and improvement to 9 Historic Parks.
- Development of 3 Family Recreation Centers.
- Implementation of the Shared-Used Principle
- Integration of Parkways into the Park, Open Space, and Greenway System.
- Creation of an Open Space system.
- Major improvements to existing parks.
- Establishment of a Greenway Division within the Parks Department
- Establishment of a Planning and Design Division within the Parks Department

**Priorities.** The following priorities outline the actions for the first ten years of implementation. However, longer term priorities should always be taken into consideration and not lost because they are long-term. In other words, as opportunities arise to acquire land, develop, redevelop, or accomplish any of the long-range objectives we should be prepared to do so.

In this section, the priorities are categorized into two implementation phases. The first phase consists of the priorities for the first five years (years 1-5) while the second phase lists priorities for the next five years (years 6-10) of the implementation program. These priorities are arranged into five categories as outlined below. (See Attached)

***Planning.*** This category is the conceptual planning of proposed projects and includes defining the site or project boundaries, identifying the issues, confirming the land acquisition needs, and incorporating recommendations from the *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan* into a conceptual plan from which staff can work.

***Property Acquisition.*** This category is the acquisition of property to preserve, protect, develop, or expand parks, open space or greenway corridors. This category identifies the highest priority properties or projects for acquisition.

***Design and Development.*** This category is the actual detailed site design and construction of existing and proposed park, open space or greenway projects. This category identifies the highest priority projects including developing and preparing final designs in conjunction with the surrounding neighborhood.

***Operations and Maintenance.*** This category is the actual maintenance of the Park, Open Space, and Greenway systems.

***Administration and Policy.*** This category includes the implementation of the policies and administration of the Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan.



**See Attachment B—Page 17**

Springfield-Greene County Park Board 2001 Parks Sales Tax Update  
July, 2010

Years 1-5  
2001-2006

**See Attachment C—Page 18**

Springfield-Greene County Park Board 2006 Parks Sales Tax Update  
July, 2010

Years 6-10  
2007-2012

## **FUTURE COUNTY-WIDE PARK SALES TAX PROJECTS**

3<sup>RD</sup> Round                      2012-2017    Currently determining Project Order  
(5-year Implementation)

4<sup>TH</sup> Round                      2017-2022    Currently determining Project Order  
(5-year Implementation)

### **Key Benchmarking Survey Study**

See Page 23 of this document.

## Template C – Inter-relationships, Themes, and Volunteer Hours Invested

(Complete one Template C form per committee at end of planning process)

This community planning process is placing an emphasis on analyzing the inter-relationships of the various plan topics (chapters). Each committee is asked to address how its plan recommendations inter-relate with the other planning topics. Please include a brief narrative that addresses how your committee's recommendations relate to the following planning topics:

- Arts, Culture, and Tourism—*Parks is connected to the current Arts and Cultural Plan. Parks is an economic driver of tourist destinations and events throughout the county.*
- Early Childhood Development—*Parks offers numerous programs and services for children of all ages.*
- Economic Development—*Parks promotes Events, Tournaments, Business Development, and Land Development throughout the region.*
- Education and Workforce Development—*Parks has an impact on education through School-Park and higher education development. Parks has an impact on the Region's entry level work force of 700-plus season jobs on an annual basis.*
- Global Perspectives and Diversity—*A dynamic Park System promotes Global Perspectives such as environmental "Best Practices." Park Systems are for all people. The Springfield-Greene County Park System has "Something for everyone", whether it be programs, parks, or educational opportunities such as Sister Cities Educational Exchanges with foreign countries.*
- Growth Management and Land Use—*Parks, Open Space and Greenways are all part of this topic as stated in Template A.*
- Housing—*Parks affect where people choose to live and provide safe havens for citizens to gather.*
- Internal Organization—*City-County Parks Board—Administrative Board*
- Natural Environment—*Park Systems of various types have a specific impact on protecting the environment and promoting conservation and sustainable "Best Practices."*

- Public Health—*Parks, Open Space and Greenways promote public health through programs, education, and quality of life places to spend leisure time.*
- Public Safety—*Parks provides safe gathering places for communities and their citizens. Parks and recreation programs provide safe environments for at risk youth throughout the community.*
- Recreation and Leisure—N/A (Attached documents)
- Transportation—*Parks and Greenways/Trails have a specific impact on transportation throughout the region. A 130 mile plan is in place to develop and connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, businesses, and communities throughout the region over a 20 year period as funds become available.*

Each committee was asked to develop its plan recommendations within the context of four cross-chapter themes. Please answer the following questions to indicate how the committee's planning addresses these four themes:

- Regionalism – How do the committee's recommendations support a regional focus; how can the Springfield metropolitan area be a better "citizen of the region" by working with Greene County, surrounding cities, and southwest Missouri?

*See Springfield-Greene County Comprehensive Plan*

- Sustainability – How do the committee's recommendations support energy efficiency, recycling, low-impact construction, and other measures of sustainability?

*See Springfield-Greene County Comprehensive Plan*

- Minimize Poverty – How do the committee's recommendations address our community's poverty problem?

Healthy and well-kept Parks and Open Spaces help poverty stricken areas of the community by promoting safe gathering places, community events, and community education.

- Civic Engagement – How do the committee's recommendations increase the level and breadth of civic engagement within the community?

The Park System currently engages over 235 groups and organizations throughout the system on a daily basis. Numerous volunteers are engaged in the Park Board programs, services, and support of park properties.

Approximately how many volunteer hours has the planning committee invested in the development of this chapter?

Over 200 public events and meetings were been held over a four year period to produce the attached information and plan. Average planning cycle ranged from 1.5 to 4 hours in length.

## Springfield-Greene County Park Board Benchmarking Survey Results

The goal was to receive completed surveys from 10 agencies. This goal was exceeded, with a total of 13 agencies completing the survey. Listed below are the 13 agencies that completed a survey:

- City of Tulsa Parks Department, Oklahoma
- City of Henderson Parks and Recreation, Nevada
- Amarillo Parks and Recreation, Texas
- Recreation and Park Commission for East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana
- Peoria Park District, Illinois
- Somerset County Park Commission, New Jersey
- Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources, Virginia
- Leon County Parks and Recreation, Florida
- City of Chattanooga Parks and Recreation, Tennessee
- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Minnesota
- Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation, Indiana
- Glendale Parks and Recreation Department, Arizona
- Rockford Park District, Illinois

The average community size in the benchmarking comparison is 264,310 citizens. To assure the most accurate of comparisons, appropriate information was presented both as per actual numbers and per 1,000 residents.

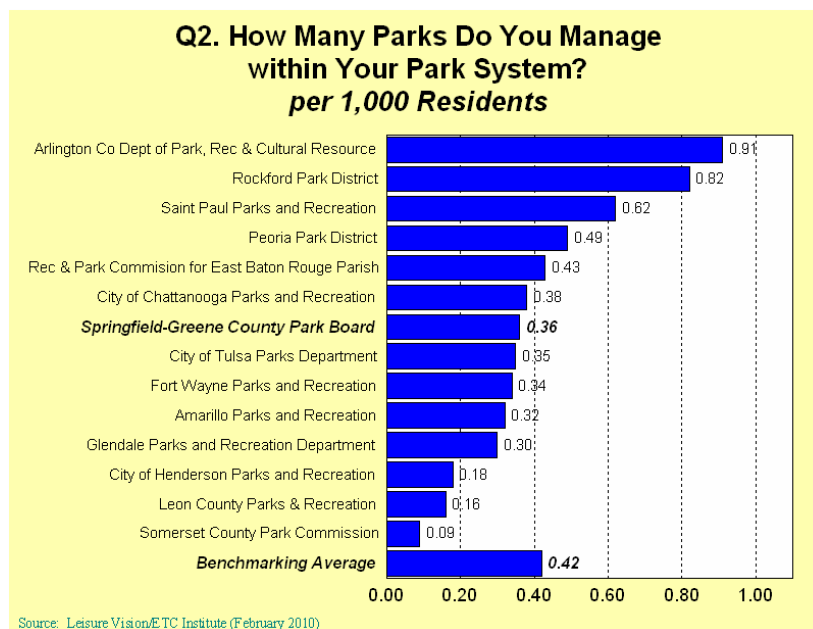
The following pages summarize major survey findings:

### KEY DATES

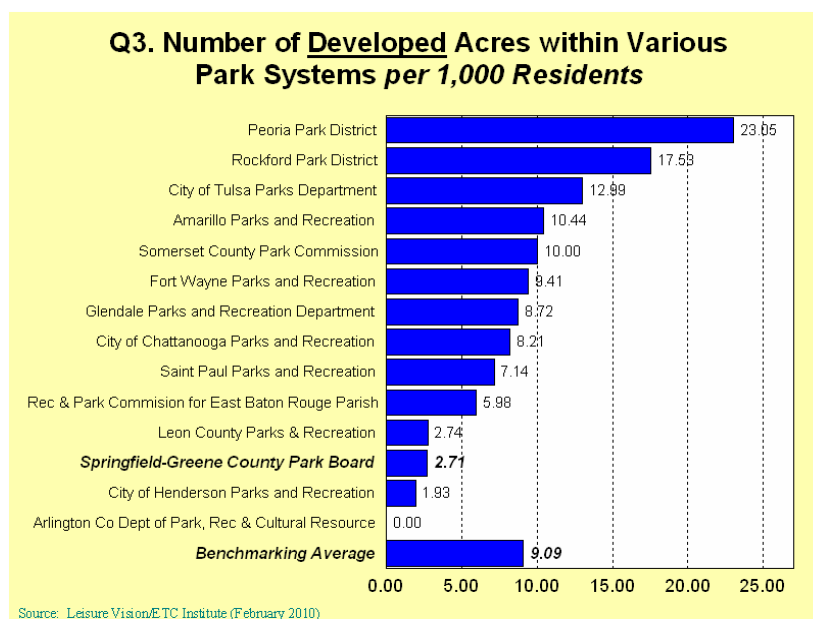
- 1869** First Parks were founded: Washington Park and LaFayette Park
- 1913** Springfield Park Board, an Administrative Board, was created
- 1996** Greene County Voters approved the creation of Springfield-Greene County Park Board, an Intergovernmental/Administrative Board

## Springfield-Greene County Park Board Benchmarking Survey Results

The Springfield-Greene County Park Board manages fewer parks per 1,000 residents (.36) than the average benchmarked agency (.42). The graphs below and on the following page show the number of parks managed, number of developed acres per 1,000 residents, number of undeveloped acres per 1,000 residents, and total acres per 1,000 residents for each of the agencies that participated in the survey.



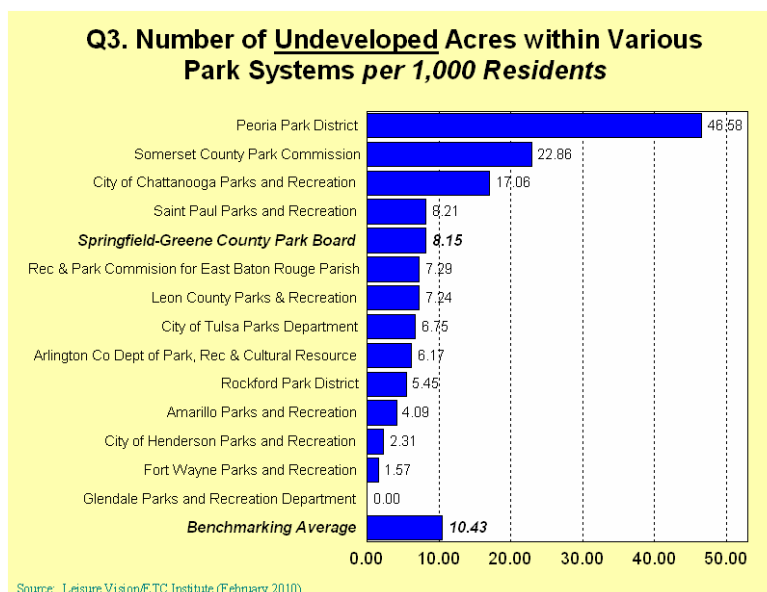
The average benchmarked agency has 2,245 actual developed acres in their park system, and 9.09 developed acres per 1,000 residents. This is higher than the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, which has 2.71 developed acres per 1,000 residents.



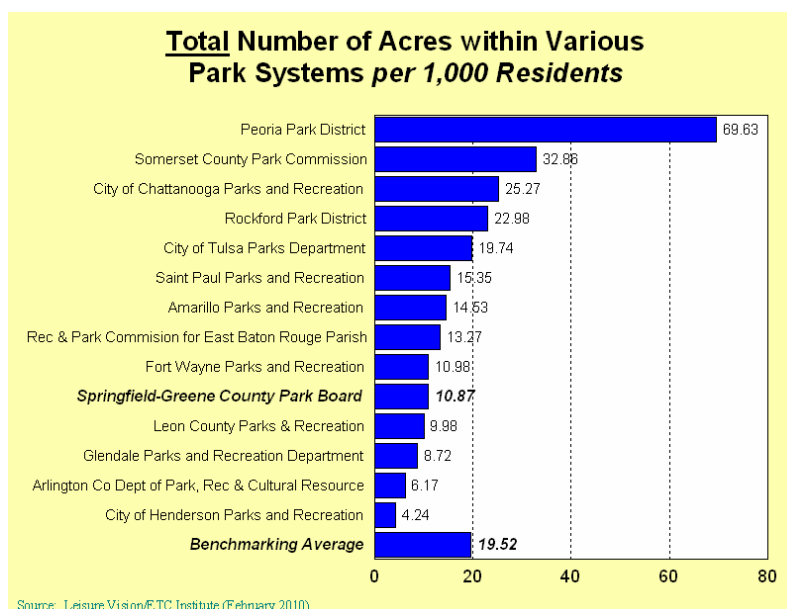


## Springfield-Greene County Park Board Benchmarking Survey Results

The average benchmarked agency has 2,420 actual undeveloped acres in their park system, and 10.43 undeveloped acres per 1,000 residents. This is higher than Springfield-Greene County Park Board, which has 8.15 undeveloped acres per 1,000 residents.

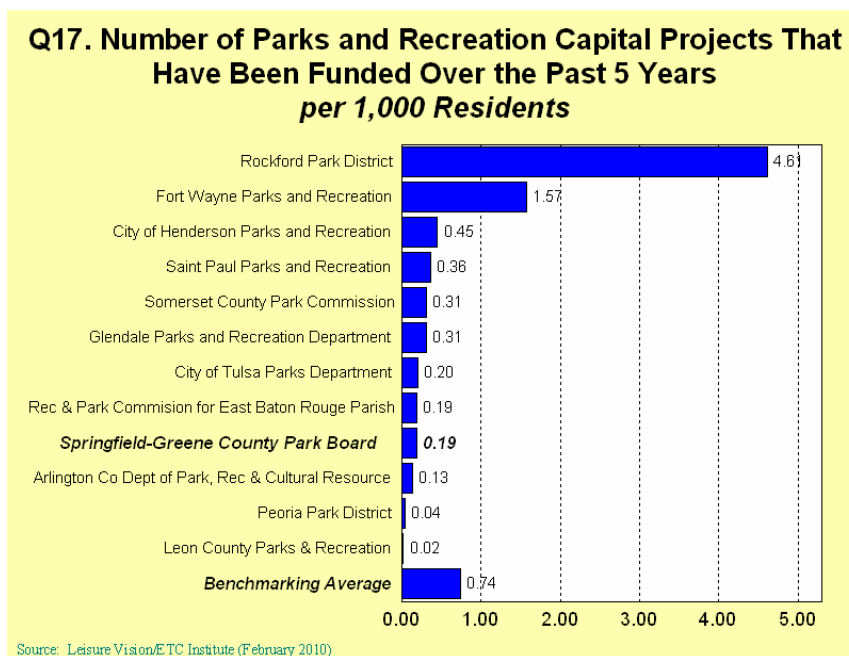


The average benchmarked agency has a total of 19.52 acres in their park system per 1,000 residents. This is significantly higher than the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, which has a total of 10.87 acres per 1,000 residents.

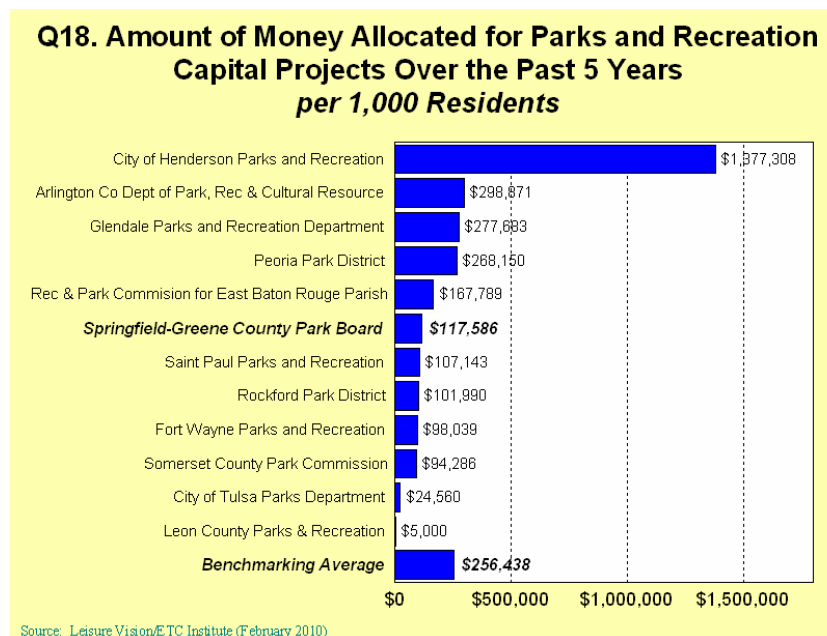


## Springfield-Greene County Park Board Benchmarking Survey Results

Over the past 5 years, the average benchmarked agency (.74) has funded more capital projects per 1,000 residents than the Springfield-Greene County Park Board (.19). The graph below shows the number of parks and recreation capital projects funded over the past 5 years per 1,000 residents for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board and each participating agency.

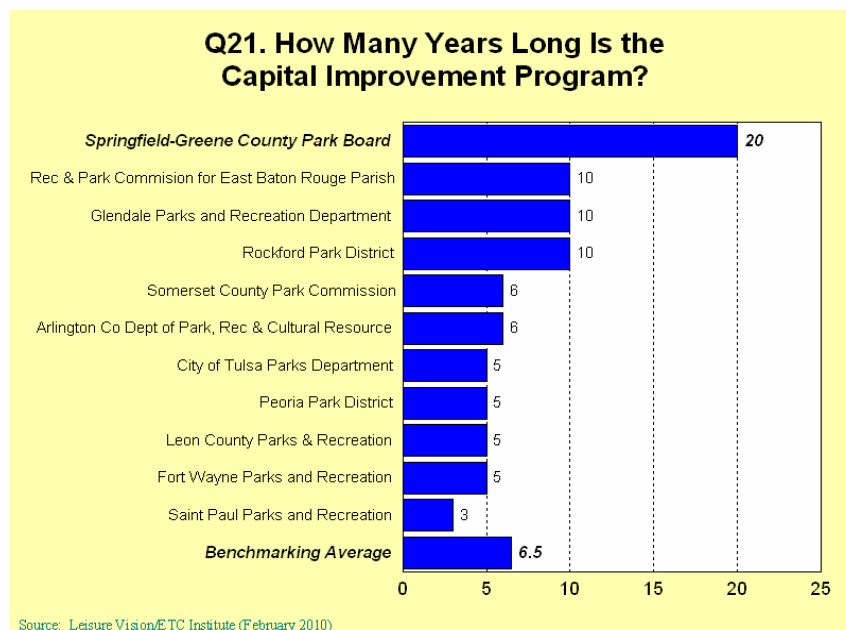


The average benchmarked agency has had \$256,438 allocated for parks and recreation capital projects over the past 5 year, which is significantly more than the Springfield-Greene County Park Board (\$117,586). The graph below shows the amount allocated for parks and recreation capital projects over the past 5 years per 1,000 residents for all participating agencies.

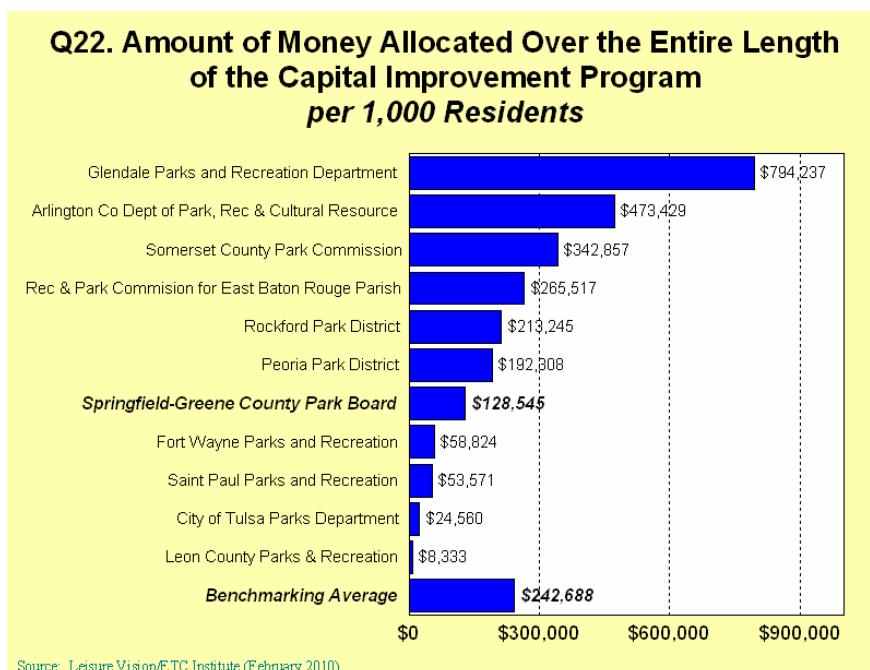


## Springfield-Greene County Park Board Benchmarking Survey Results

The Springfield-Greene County Park Board's capital improvement program is significantly longer (20 years) than the average benchmarked agency (6.5 years). The graph below shows the numbers of years long the capital improvement program is for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board and each participating agency.

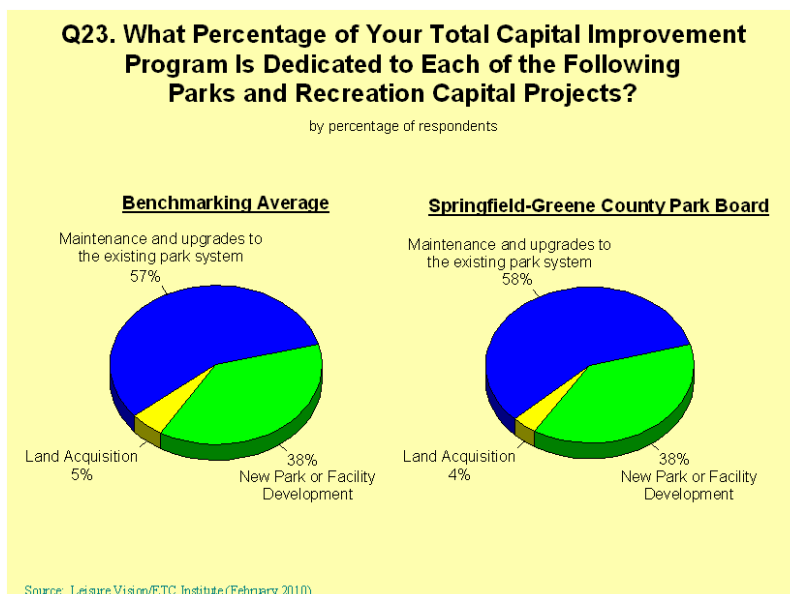


The average benchmarked agency has allocated \$242,688 per 1,000 residents over the entire length of their capital improvement program for parks and recreation, which is significantly more than the Springfield-Greene County Park Board (\$128,545).

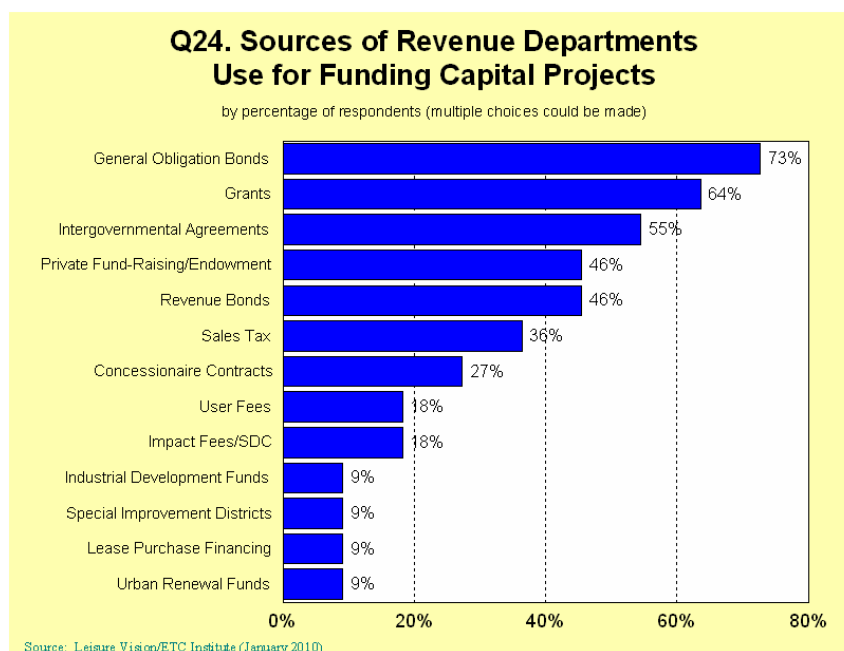


## Springfield-Greene County Park Board Benchmarking Survey Results

The average benchmarked agency dedicates 57% of their total capital improvement program to maintenance and upgrades to the existing park system, 38% to new park or facility development, and 5% to land acquisition, which is nearly the same as the Springfield-Greene County Park Board.



The Springfield-Greene County Park Board uses general obligation bonds, user fees, private fund-raising/endowment, sales taxes, grants, lease purchase financing, and intergovernmental agreements to fund capital projects. The graph below shows the percentage of participating agencies that use various sources of revenue to fund capital projects.



# *Springfield-Greene County Comprehensive Plan*

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## *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan Element*

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# Springfield-Greene County Park Board 2001 Parks Sales Tax Update July 2010

(Years 1-5)  
2001-2006

South Dry Sac - Lost Hill through Ashcroft Estates, Completed 2006  
Little Sac - Fellows Lake nature trail, Completed 2005  
Frisco Highline - Completed 2005  
Jordan Creek - Smith Park to Silver Springs Park, Completed 2006  
Fassnight Creek - Neighborhood connection, Completed 2006  
South Creek - Carver to Battlefield Road, Completed 2005  
Ward Branch - Wanda Gray to Riverbluff Cave, Completed 2008  
James River - Within Lake Springfield Park, Completed 2006

Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park - Phase I - Completed 2007  
Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center and Park - Completed 2010  
Lake Springfield Park - Phase I - Completed 2007

Rex P Kreider Park (Oxbow) - Acquired 2007  
Lost Hill - Acquired 2005, Phase I in progress 2010

Doling Family Center - Completed 2003  
Chesterfield Aquatic Center - Completed 2004

School-Parks - The 7 listed - Completed 2005-2007  
Including the completion of the following School-Park sites:  
Horrace-Mann 2006, Wilson's Creek 2004 and David Harrison 2009.  
Hickory Hills School-Park - Completed 2010

Dickerson Park Zoo - (2001 expansion) Completed 2005  
Springfield SkatePark - Outdoor facility, Completed 2005  
Close Memorial Park - Updated master plan, Phase I Completed 2007

Historical park lighting improvements at these locations (Including Grant Beach) - Completed 2006  
Doling Park Museum - Completed 2006

Examples of projects completed: Close Memorial Park site utilities/entrance gate 2009, Cruse Dog Park trail/parking lot 2009, etc.

Total \$50,000,000 (Includes funding for area municipalities)

## Trails - Acquisition/Development

1. South Dry Sac
2. Little Sac
3. Frisco Highline
4. Jordan Creek Greenway
5. Fassnight Greenway
6. South Creek Greenway
7. Ward Branch Greenway
8. James River Greenway

## Area-wide Parks - Acquisition/Development

9. Wilson-Rutledge Park
10. Valley Water Mill
11. Lake Springfield

## Open Space Projects and Preservation

12. James River Oxbow
13. Lost Hill

## Recreation Centers

14. Doling Urban Community Park and Family Center, Phase 2
15. Chesterfield Aquatic Center

## School Parks - Acquisition/Development

16. Wanda Gray
17. Cherokee
18. Sequiota
19. McGregor
20. Reed Middle School
21. Bissett
22. Truman

## Special Use Parks

23. Dickerson Park Zoo
24. Springfield SkatePark
25. Close Memorial Park

## Historic Parks

26. Fassnight Park
27. Sequiota Park
28. Silver Springs
29. Smith Park
30. Washington Park
31. Doling Park

Park Development and Infrastructure Improvements

# Springfield-Greene County Park Board 2006 Parks Sales Tax Update As of July 2010

(Years 6-10)  
2007-2012

